HealthMap Newsletter November 2010

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Outbreaks Near Me Application for Facebook

The "Outbreaks Near Me" application is now available via Facebook! Find out what outbreaks are occurring in an area and let friends know. Open the application to see all current outbreaks, or set up the application to send an automatic alert whenever an outbreak is occurring in your area. If you know of an outbreak not yet listed, be the first to report it using the app's unique outbreak reporting feature. You will be credited and your report will be featured on the HealthMap website.

New Features

(1) Contextualized Visualizations: From the HealthMap main page users can now view statistical visualizations on each alert to include a timeline of the selected disease in each specific location, disease alert frequency for each location, spatial distribution of disease, and the proportion of worldwide alerts due to each disease. Additional information for each visualization is available by hovering over the blue 'i' next to each visualization's title. This feature is available by clicking on the graph icon both from the main page, below the map in the list view of alerts, and from any bubble that opens upon clicking a marker on the map.

From the same window that opens when the graph icon is clicked, related alerts are still accessible and able to be viewed by clicking on the 'Related Alerts' tab. Alerts on the same disease and location as the one being viewed are listed.

(2) Webinar: HealthMap 3.0 New Features and Training: With the launch of the newly redesigned HealthMap site in May 2010, many new features were added to HealthMap to improve usability. A webinar was held in July to introduce users to these new features and functionalities. The webinar, a PowerPoint overview, and Q&A from the session are all available at: http://healthmap.org/about/

(3) Share Alerts: Read an alert in HealthMap that a co-worker or friend might be interested in?

Now, HealthMap users can easily share alerts upon clicking a marker on the map. Use the icons next to each alert title to share alerts on Facebook, Twitter, Digg, Delicious, or quickly and easily email the alert to a colleague.

(4) New Display Options: From the HealthMap main page at http://healthmap.org/en/ different display options are now able to be selected from within the dark blue bar directly above the map. The options give users the ability to view just the map of alerts, just a list of alerts, or the map in full screen mode with rotating zoom levels and open alert bubbles. The full screen mode can be exited by pressing the escape key on your keyboard.

(5) Weekly Spotlight News Blog: The HealthMap blog is now providing readers with an overview of each week's infectious disease news highlights from around the globe. This week's post is available at http://healthmapblog.blogspot.com/.

SmartPhone Applications

(1) MedWatcher: The MedWatcher application for iPhone and iPad is now freely available from the iTunes store. MedWatcher allows users to stay up-to-date with the latest news and overnment safety alerts on prescription medications. In the MyDrugs section, current prescriptions being used can be listed so that developments on those specific drugs can be tracked. The application also allows patients and/or healthcare professionals to submit adverse events due to prescription medication to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to assist in making drugs safer for everyone. For more information visit http://medwatcher.org.

(2) Outbreaks Near Me: HealthMap's Outbreaks Near Me (ONM) application for iPhone and Android devices has been updated to allow for improved tracking and reporting of wildlife diseases and events. Users of the ONM app can now submit details on wildlife events to include the animal species involved, any action taken, and a photo of the animal if available.

Recent Publications

- Nelson N, Brownstein JS, Hartley D. Event-based biosurveillance of respiratory disease in Mexico, 2007-2009: Connection to Influenza A(H1N1). Eurosurveillance. 2010; 15(30). http://eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=19626

- Wilson K, Brownstein JS, Fidler D. Strengthening the International Health Regulations. Health Policy and Planning. July 2010. http://heapol.oxfordjournals.org/citmgr?gca=heapol;czq026v1

- Reis BY, Brownstein, JS. Measuring the Impact of Health Policies Using Internet Search Patterns: The Case of Abortion. BMC Public Health. August 2010. http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20738850

- A full list of publications can be viewed at: http://healthmap.org/publications

Selection of HealthMap Articles in the News

- John Sutter. (October 2010). Texts, Maps Battle Haiti Cholera Outbreak. CNN.
  http://www.cnn.com/2010/TECH/innovation/10/29/haiti.cholera.tech/

- MedGadget. (October 2010). HealthMap at TEDMED 2010. medGadget.com.
  http://www.medgadget.com/archives/2010/10/healthmap_at_tedmed_2010.html?ref=nf

- Carey Goldberg. (September 2010). Drug Alerts at Your Fingertips. NPR, WBUR.org.
  http://commonhealth.wbur.org/2010/09/drug-alerts-at-your-fingertips/

- Elizabeth Cooney. (September 2010). New iPhone App Tracks Drug Safety. The Boston Globe.
  http://www.boston.com/news/health/blog/2010/09/new_iphone_app.html

- Carolyn Duffy Marsan. (August 2010). iPhone Apps that Could Save Your Life. Network World.
  http://www.networkworld.com/news/2010/080210-iphone-applications-medical.html?hpg1=bn

We hope you find the new design and features of HealthMap useful. Please continue to let us know how we might improve HealthMap.

Best regards,
The HealthMap Team